

ITEM 5

COMMUNITY AWARDS EID CEREMONY – 21 NOVEMBER 2004 4.30PM – 8.30PM – SUNDAY

Event presentation of awards to young people in the local community held at the Pakistani Community Centre.

Pam Thompson contacted the event organiser to find details of this event. It was an event open to all members of the community. Although on posters no named contact or phone number was given. As WAC members I went to this event with my grandchildren. Also Nasreen Iqbal and her family attended.

On arrival I was asked to go round the back where the women 'ladies are at the back'.

We notified their volunteer to accept our attendance on their list of registrations.

The arrangement was such that men were in the front at the staged end and the women were at the back half. A separate veiled screen divided the areas. Between the veiled area was a flat screen showing the stage but only head and shoulders of the speaker.

You could hear sounds or music but could not see the full stage. The atmosphere was strange. My grandchildren were unsettled because they could not see the stage people or performance being delivered. Some people were walking out of the hall. After trying hard to remain and experience this community event my grandchildren could not take anymore and they decided to walk out and leave. My efforts to build relationships and respect of other community celebrations in rich in culture was shattered. My grandchildren need to experience and be part of the community spirit of all cultures in our communities in Derby. My colleague Nasreen's family also were unhappy and they left the event after I left with my grandchildren.

This event was in my opinion not publicised fully. As a member on MECAC and having heard about the presentation given on 'the Pakistani Youth Development Project' which Zia Bhatti delivered was disappointed this event was not publicised at the MECAC meeting on 18 November so all community representatives and advisors may have had the opportunity to consider attending this 'community awards' event. It is understood the DCC funded and supported this event.

Questions that need answers include –

From DCC which Councillors other than Pakistani Councillors were involved in the preparation or process for this event.

Who and which official women workers were involved in the preparation of this event.

Equal opportunities policy impacts?

Racial Equality policy

Having spoken and shared my experiences with other community members and especially Pakistani Community members. The events held at the Pakistani Centre in the previous years have been organised in similar ways. These people also state that each year the number of people attending these type of events have declined in numbers. My feeling is that there is some evidence this is due to the division of veiled separation in the Pakistani Centre. Main argument or suggestion is women don't like the partition of the hall.

Shirley Howard